

March 11, 2012

Transportation Committee
Room 2300, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Testimony in support of Raised Bill No. 5458 and the use of red light safety cameras to make Connecticut's intersections safer for cyclists and pedestrians

Dear Chairman Maynard, Chairman Guerrero, and members of the Transportation Committee:

My name is Charles Beristain and I live in West Hartford. I am a founding member of Bike Walk Connecticut and a member of the Connecticut Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board (we submit an annual report to the Transportation Committee, the Governor, and the DOT Commissioner). I am also an advisor to the West Hartford Bicycle Advisory Committee.

I support Raised Bill No. 5458 which would enable Connecticut municipalities to utilize automated red light cameras to improve the safety of intersections for motor vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

As an active cyclist and walker, I have grave concerns about my safety at traffic lights because of red light runners and I think that these cameras will help in calming traffic.

I find the bill very well crafted, in a way that addresses the concerns that have been raised. For example: limiting size of the town to 48,000 or more, setting the fee to a maximum of only \$50, and the requirement to report statistics for the first year of operation.

Opponents are concerned that municipalities will use these cameras as a revenue producer, catching funeral processions and turn on red vehicles, but it is doubtful that they could ever become revenue producers in Connecticut. Imagine this happening in my town of West Hartford. The mayor's phone would be very busy.

According to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, the use of red light safety cameras in large U.S. cities saved 159 lives and reduced the rate of fatal red light running crashes by 35 percent.

I strongly support Raised Bill No. 5458

Sincerely
Charles Beristain
West Hartford